

*Nature  
of baptism*

this doctrine cannot of course attach much importance to baptism, for they cannot from such a stand point, understand the meaning of an ordinance, that symbolizes the essential impurity of the heart, and the necessity of cleansing and renewal by the Spirit of God. Parents who imbibe these sentiments must teach their children that their only danger is from the power of animal nature, and that self-mortification is the only way of holiness; and thus an unscriptural ascetism will be put in place of the work of the Spirit of God.

3. The Church of Rome, and a large section of the Episcopal Church of England, while acknowledging the inherent depravity of infants, teach, that *by baptism properly administered, they are born again*; for though being by nature born in sin and the children of wrath, they are hereby made the children of grace. This is contrary to general experience and observation, for there is no evidence that those baptized are the subjects of a saving change of nature, not given to others. It is without support in the Word of God, and opposed to its testimony. The sacred writers make a distinct difference between the outward sign and the inward grace signified. "The like figure," saith the Apostle Peter, "whereunto even baptism doth now save us, (*not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God*;) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." (Pet. iii. 21.) If baptism be regeneration, or the means of converting it, how could St. Paul say that he was sent, "not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel?" (Cor. i. 17.) Or how could he thank God (1 Cor. i. 14,) that he baptized none but Crispus and Gaius, and the household of Stephanas;" and, in the same epistle, (1 Cor. iv. 15,) say, "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus have I begotten you through the Gospel?" Is not faith an essential condition of regeneration and justification? When we look into the New Testament and see the deep spirituality of this great